

CHICKEN PICKIN' 101



BY SAM SMILEY

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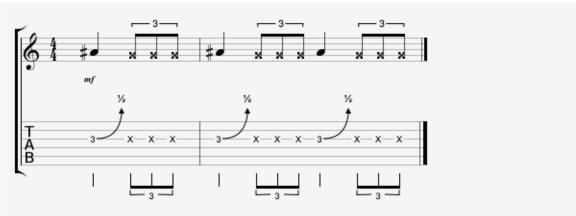
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Chicken Pickin' 101 – 10 Licks

Thanks for downloading this free eBook, I hope you can get a lot out of the licks here. Make sure to stay tuned to Sam Smiley Music for more country and chicken pickin' resources. If you have any questions just head there and fill out the contact form OR get in touch on Facebook or Twitter.

Let's crank up the twang and get into the licks.

James Burton – All of Me Belongs to All of You



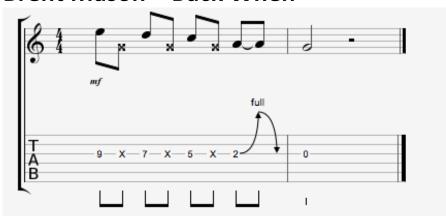
Many will say that James Burton is actually THE father of chicken pickin' and his playing with Merle Haggard, Elvis Presley, and the Everly Brothers certainly helps back that up. This lick is from the Merle Haggard classic "All of Me Belongs to All of You." This lick has the muted notes that are an essential sound to chicken pickin. Mute the notes with your fretting hand instead of the picking hand. In order to do this, just lift up slightly on the note.

Albert Lee – Luxury Liner



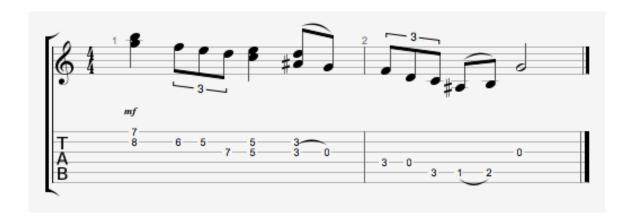
Albert Lee was a key member of Emmylou Harris' band for the album *Luxury Liner* and plays some absolute smoking licks throughout the album. This lick is over an E7 chord. He starts with thirds, and really plays a pretty typical line here. The thing that makes this really cool is the rhythmic variation he puts in with the 16th notes on beats 3 of bar 1, and 1 and 3 on bar 2. It's a subtle difference but gives it the chicken pickin' sound. The descending figure down the neck is also very cool.

Brent Mason – Back When



Brent Mason was the guitarist on some of Tim McGraw's biggest hits, including "Back When." This lick uses the 'clucks' of muted strings. Make sure to mute using your fretting hand – not your picking hand. The bend at the end brings the 2^{nd} of the scale up to the flatted 3^{rd} which gives it a nice bluesy sound.

Brent Mason – Mercury Blues



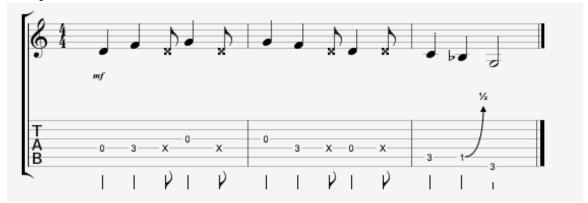
Our first lick is from the end of Alan Jackson's "Mercury Blues." This lick is in the key of G and uses a few open strings. One of the hallmarks of Chicken Pickin' guitar is the use of triplets and pull offs in the lines. This one has both.

Brent Mason - She's Got the Rhythm



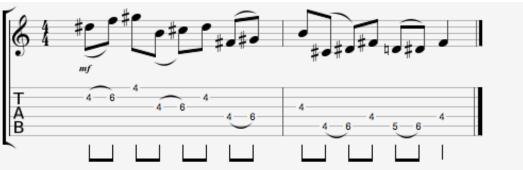
This lick is from another Alan Jackson song, "She's Got the Rhythm." Again Brent Mason relies on the triplet. This lick features double stops all the way through. The lick is based on sort of a blues scale/mixolydian (major with flatted 7th) hybrid scale. The lick is in the key of A.

Roy Nichols - Workin' Man Blues



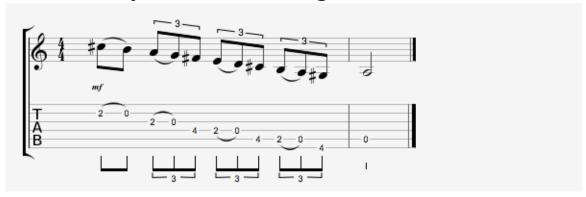
Roy Nichols was the guitarist for Merle Haggard and another one of the fathers of the Chicken Pickin' style. "Workin' Man Blues" is easily one of his most famous performance. Make sure to check out the recording of this one to get the vibe. This is a great example of the "cluck-a" low picking in Chicken Pickin'.

Roy Nichols – Workin' Man Blues



Here is Nichols' ending to the solo on "Workin' Man Blues." This one sounds much more difficult than it really ishe's basically playing a hammer on lick on each set of 2 strings. Very basic, but very cool. Since it's a three note lick you get an interesting dotted-quarter vibe.

Brad Paisley – The Best Thing I Had Goin'



Brad Paisley is a master of the pull off and triplet feel. This lick is in the key of A. He is just following the A mixolydian scale (with a natural 7^{th} thrown in at the end). The use of the ringing open strings makes this one very unique.

Brad Paisley – Little Moments



Here is another Brad Paisley lick featuring hammer ons and triplets. This one is clearly in the key of A, moving up the A major pentatonic scale.

Don Rich – Open Up Your Heart



Don Rich was one of the fathers of Chicken Pickin' guitar as the guitarist with Buck Owens. The second lick from "Open Up Your Heart" is a quintessential chicken pickin' lick. This one can be transferred to many different situations. Make sure that the triplets on the G string are muffled or deadened, that's where the sound comes from.

Classic Stock Lick



This lick is a stock lick that you would find in just about any country guitarist's vocabulary. This one is in the key of A using mostly the mixolydian scale.

Free Download

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